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AUTHOR Osofsky, Joy D.
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ABSTRACT

The Coordinating Council on Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention published an action plan in 1996 that established eight objectives as the foundation for innovative and effective action by federal, state, and local governments, in partnership with private sector organizations, to reduce juvenile violence and victimization. This bulletin summarizes the accomplishments of council member agencies in meeting one of the Action Plan's eight objectives and numerous related action steps. It focuses on objective five, breaking the cycle of violence by addressing youth victimization, abuse, and neglect. Following the organization of the Action Plan, Section 1 presents recent data on juvenile victimization and compares it with data in the Action Plan. Section 2 discusses victimization trends. Section 3 discusses effective and promising strategies and programs. Section 4 provides updated information on federal programs since 1996. Lists of sources of additional information are included. (Contains 22 references.) (JDM)

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ACTION PLAN *Update*

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Addressing Youth Victimization

Joy D. Osofsky

The Coordinating Council on Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention published Combating Violence and Delinquency: The National Juvenile Justice Action Plan *in 1996. This report established eight objectives as the foundation for innovative and effective action by Federal, State, and local governments, in partnership with private sector organizations, to reduce juvenile violence and victimization. This Bulletin, the first in a series on the implementation of the* Action Plan, *summarizes the accomplishments of Council member agencies in meeting one of the* Action Plan's *eight objectives and numerous related action steps.*

A Message From OJJDP

Although violent crime has decreased significantly since publication of *Combating Violence and Delinquency: The National Juvenile Justice Action Plan* in 1996, too many children continue to be victims of violent crime, child abuse and neglect, and exposure to violence. In turn, this victimization perpetuates a cycle of violence in which children later become the perpetrators of violence against others. Fortunately, a variety of programs and services have been implemented at the State and local levels to address youth victimization and its effects, with Federal agencies collaborating to support this work through efforts such as the Coordinating Council's call to break the cycle of violence. It is through such Federal, State, and local collaboration that we will make a positive difference for America's children.

Combating Violence and Delinquency: The National Juvenile Justice Action Plan (Action Plan) presented effective strategies to reduce juvenile violence, delinquency, and victimization and provided information about Federal training, technical assistance, grants, research, evaluation, and other resources. Each section of the *Action Plan* addressed one of eight objectives and outlined relevant research, programs that had been evaluated, and successful strategies for meeting that objective. The *Action Plan* also identified specific action steps that Federal agencies could take to work toward each objective.

This Bulletin focuses on objective 5: "Break the cycle of violence by addressing youth victimization, abuse, and neglect." Following the organization of the *Action Plan*, the first section presents recent data on juvenile victimization and compares it with data in the *Action Plan*; the second section discusses victimization trends; the third section discusses effective and promising strategies and programs; and the fourth section provides updated information on Federal programs since 1996.[1]

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Recent Data on Juvenile Victimization

Although overall violent crime has decreased significantly since 1994, the data year referred to in the *Action Plan*, and continues to decline, juvenile crime and victimization both remain very serious problems. The definition of "victimization" in this Bulletin also includes children's witnessing of and exposure to violence either in their communities or in their homes. Juveniles are twice as likely as adults to be victims of serious violent crime, and the victims include young children; 1 in 18 violent crime victims is under the age of 12 (Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, 2000). In the majority of cases of juvenile victimization, the perpetrator is a family member or an acquaintance rather than a stranger, a statistic consistent with the findings of the *Action Plan*. This fact is particularly important in relation to the victimization of children in violent domestic situations, an area of growing concern and recognition in the violence prevention field (Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, 2000).

Violent Crime

In the United States, homicide is one of the leading causes of death for juveniles. The *Action Plan* estimated 2,000 children, most under age 4, are murdered by parents or caretakers each year; of the children in this group who are under age 12, the majority have been previously abused by the person who killed them (Coordinating Council on Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, 1996:75). More recent data show that the problems remain very serious. In 1998, the National Center for Health Statistics listed homicide as the third leading cause of death for children ages 1–4 and 5–14, and the second leading cause for persons 15–24 (Murphy, 2000:8). Of the 2,691 juvenile murder victims—an average of 7 per day—in 1998, 20 percent were under age 5 and 54 percent were between the ages of 17 and 19 (Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, 2000:3; Bureau of Justice Statistics, 1999:297). Thirty-two percent were female, and 44 percent were African American (Bureau of Justice Statistics, 1999:302). Sixty-two percent of all juvenile murder victims and 57 percent of murdered youth who were 13 or older were killed with a firearm (Bureau of Justice Statistics, 1999:297). Forty percent were killed by family members, 45 percent by acquaintances, and only 15 percent by strangers (Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, 2000). The older juvenile victims, compared with those under age 13, were more likely to be male and African American (Bureau of Justice Statistics, 1999:302). The younger victims were more likely to be killed by family members (Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, 2000). These statistics are consistent with data reported in the *Action Plan*, indicating that most child murders, especially of younger children, are committed by family members or acquaintances rather than strangers. Several of the programs described later in this Bulletin offer innovative approaches to preventing or intervening in violence by family members.

The statistics cited above reflect juvenile victimization that was reported to police. However, in 1996, approximately half of the serious violent victimization—including aggravated assault, murder, forcible rape, and robbery—of juveniles was not reported to police or other authorities (teachers, school principals) (Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, 2000:7). Violent crimes that occur in schools, those that result in injury, and those that involve an adult rather than a juvenile perpetrator are the most likely to be reported (Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, 2000:11). The programs described later in this Bulletin are working to address some of these key elements of juvenile victimization.

Child Abuse and Neglect

The following statistics on abused and neglected children will help practitioners quantify and plan strategies to combat child abuse and neglect. In 1999, child protective services agencies received reports on about 2.97 million allegedly maltreated children (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 2001), close to the 2.9 million that were reported in the *Action Plan*. The allegations in 28 percent of the 1999 reports were substantiated; of those substantiated reports, 52 percent of the victims were female (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 2001). Victimization rates varied by race and ethnicity. African American children had the highest rate of victimization (25.2 per 1,000), followed by Hispanics (12.6 per 1,000), whites (10.6 per 1,000), and Asian/Pacific Islanders (4.4 per 1,000) (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 2001). Children age 3 and younger had the highest rates of neglect (10.8 per 1,000 for boys and 10.3 per 1,000 for girls), but boys ages 4–11 had the highest rate of physical abuse (2.6 per 1,000). Girls were more likely to be sexually abused, with 12- to 15-year-olds in the most danger (2.8 per 1,000) (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 2001). Eighty-seven percent of the victims were maltreated by one or both parents; 44.7 percent of the substantiated cases involved a mother acting alone (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 2001). Children under age 6 accounted for 86 percent of fatalities caused by child abuse and neglect,

with children less than a year old accounting for 43 percent (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 2001).

To understand the effects of victimization, it is important to consider the risk factors that can lead to problem behaviors. For example, in a prospective study that followed a group of abused and neglected children (908 in the treatment group compared with 667 in the control group, who had not been abused and neglected), Kaufman and Widom (1999) reported that being abused or neglected in childhood increased the likelihood that a youth would run away from home, which, in turn, increased the risk for juvenile arrest. The abused and neglected group completed fewer years of schooling and scored significantly lower than the control group on intellectual functioning, irrespective of age, sex, race, and criminal history. Significantly more members of the abused and neglected group held menial and semiskilled jobs, and they were more likely to be unemployed or underemployed than the members of the control group, who were more likely to be skilled workers and professionals. As a result, members of the treatment group had lower earning potential. In their personal lives, victims of child abuse and neglect also suffered greater marital instability and had a higher incidence of separation and divorce than members of the control group. The results of Kaufman and Widom's study show the long-term effects of childhood victimization and highlight the importance of efforts to prevent it.

Witnessing Violence

A major advance in addressing children's exposure to violence and victimization in the past 5 years has come from an expanded awareness and understanding of children as witnesses to violence, especially domestic violence. The Packard Foundation recently published a comprehensive volume, *Domestic Violence and Children*,[2] that highlights important recent work in the field of domestic violence and offers a comprehensive perspective on many of the important issues faced by children who are exposed to domestic violence. While efforts to develop prevention, advocacy, and support programs for adult victims have increased, much less attention has been paid to children, who are often considered "invisible victims."

Both research and clinical work have shown that witnessing community and domestic violence has a consistently negative impact on children's emotional, social, and cognitive development, although it affects children of different ages in different ways. The effects of witnessing domestic violence, which affects a child's trusting relationships, can be especially severe. Even in the earliest phases of development, infants and toddlers exhibit clear associations between exposure to violence and emotional and behavioral problems (Dell, Siegel, and Gaensbauer, 1993; Osofsky and Fenichel, 1999).

How witnessing violence affects children and their ability to cope depends on many risk and protective factors, including individual characteristics (such as the temperament and resilience of the children) and family support issues (such as their parents' ability to support them and help them deal with the trauma). When parents witness violence or are victims of violence themselves, they are more likely to have difficulty being emotionally available to their children. They may become depressed and unable to provide for their children's needs.

Recent Trends Regarding the Relationship Between Youth Victimization and Violence

Since the publication of the *Action Plan*, several new and emerging trends regarding youth violence have been identified. These trends, including violence perpetrated by children within their families and violence by female youth, are discussed below.

Increase in Violence Committed by Girls and Victimization of Girls

In the later part of the 20th century, it became clear that the involvement of girls and women in criminal activity had increased so greatly that they accounted for the fastest growing segments of both the juvenile and the criminal justice systems (Acoca, 1999). Between 1993 and 1998, increases in arrests were greater (or decreases smaller) for girls than for boys in almost every offense category (Bureau of Justice Statistics, 1999:352). This trend suggests that prevention and intervention programs for youth should pay special attention to the needs of at-risk girls. Early victimization, including physical, sexual, and emotional abuse, plays an extremely important, and often paramount, role in affecting the likelihood that a girl will enter the juvenile justice system and it contributes significantly to delinquency, adult criminality, and violent criminal behavior. Almost 70 percent of girls in the juvenile justice system have histories of physical abuse, compared with approximately 20 percent of teenage females in the general population (Lederman and Brown, 2000). More than 70 percent of

females in the juvenile justice system and in shelters report sexual abuse and assault, compared with 32 percent of boys (Lederman and Brown, 2000). The significant levels of victimization that girls in the juvenile justice system have experienced provide the first step toward delinquent behavior (Lederman and Brown, 2000). The 1998 National Council on Crime and Delinquency (NCCD) study of girls in the California juvenile justice system confirmed an earlier study of 151 adult female State prisoners who indicated a history of violent victimization (Acoca, 1999:5). Of the nearly 200 juvenile female offenders who were interviewed in the NCCD study, 92 percent reported that they had experienced some form of emotional, physical, and/or sexual abuse. Further, many girls first entered the juvenile justice system as runaways, a high proportion of them seeking to escape abuse at home (Chesney-Lind and Shelden, 1998; Acoca, 1999). Thus, the study found a direct correlation between victimization in the home and involvement in the juvenile justice system.

Victimization as a Precursor to Battering of Parents or Caretakers by Children

Despite the decreasing levels of juvenile arrests for violent crimes (i.e., murder, forcible rape, robbery, and aggravated assault), juveniles still accounted for 17 percent of all violent crime arrests in 1998 (Bureau of Justice Statistics, 1999:351). Although accurate data are not available on the percentage of these youthful offenders who were victims of child abuse and neglect or were exposed to domestic violence in their own homes, the percentage is probably very high. In surveys of Federal, State, and local prison inmates conducted by the Bureau of Justice Statistics, both male and female respondents were twice as likely as members of the general population to report childhood physical or sexual abuse (Harlow, 1999:1). In 1997, the Child Welfare League of America released a report on a community study done in Sacramento County, CA, which found that 9- to 12-year-old children known to the child welfare system were 67 times more likely to be arrested than their age cohorts in the general population (Child Welfare League of America, 1997). In addition, several notable reports by researchers, interventionists, and judges agree that the majority of children who witness violence in their homes demonstrate a wide range of problems, including aggression, emotional instability, and violence (Langer, 1997; Osofsky, 1997).

Some studies have tried to clarify the connection between victimization and delinquency. Notably, in 1997, the Honorable Lester Langer, Associate Administrative Judge of the 11th Judicial Circuit, received a grant from the U.S. Department of Justice's Violence Against Women Grants Office (VAWGO, now VAWO) to document the number of cases related to domestic violence that were filed in the Miami-Dade County Juvenile Court in a 5-month period. This study (Langer, 1997) found that a significant proportion of these cases involved domestic violence perpetrated by a juvenile against parents or siblings. The data suggest that the percentage has increased and is likely to continue to increase. Reasons for the increase in reported cases may include better training that enables police to identify domestic violence, a broader definition of domestic violence that includes family members other than parents, and greater awareness of what is unacceptable behavior within a family. In this limited data set, the primary victim of juvenile violence in the family is the mother.

Data from calls to a 24-hour hotline for the Violence Intervention Program (VIP) in New Orleans, LA, support the findings from Miami-Dade. Of the 300 calls received in 1999, more than half were from parents concerned about violent behavior by their 13- to 17-year-old children (Osofsky, 2000). Courts nationwide have developed innovations to address child maltreatment and the problem of abuse perpetrated by children that results in calls to police by a parent.

Effective and Promising Strategies and Programs

The "Effective and Promising Strategies and Programs" section of the *Action Plan* described programs supported by the Federal government to address youth victimization, such as the State Court Improvement Program, unified family courts, children's advocacy centers, and Court Appointed Special Advocate programs. It also emphasized the importance of programs that focus on family preservation, family support, and independent living; early family strengthening and support; and victimization prevention (Coordinating Council on Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, 1996:69–72). Some of the same programs and new programs that support these goals are described later in this Bulletin. This section highlights the proliferation of innovative community-based programs, which have been a major development in the field of violence prevention, early intervention, and identification of and assistance to victims. Several programs have been developed across the country to link mental health professionals with police departments. Five such programs are described below.

The Child Development-Community Policing Program (CD-CP) in New Haven, CT, funded by the U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ), Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP), was designed and implemented in 1991 to address the psychological impact of chronic exposure to community, family, or school-related violence on children and families (Marans and Berkman, 1997). The partnership between the Yale University Child Study Center, the New Haven Department of Police Services, and the New Haven County Office of Juvenile Probation coordinates the efforts of mental health professionals and community police officers to reduce the impact of violence on children and their families by providing interdisciplinary interventions to children who are victims, witnesses, or perpetrators of violent crime. The program applies principles of child development and human functioning to the daily work of community police officers to increase their understanding of the impact of violence on children and of ways to intervene more effectively.

Since its inception, CD-CP has intervened in the lives of more than 3,000 children and families in New Haven. Several hundred police supervisors, line officers, and juvenile probation officers have received training through the Child Development Seminar and Clinical Fellowship components of the program. In addition, CD-CP has consulted with and provided direct services to multiple school and child welfare systems in crises.

For more information about CD-CP, contact:

Child Development-Community Policing Program
Yale University
School of Medicine
230 South Frontage Road
New Haven, CT 06520-7900
203-785-7047
203-785-4608 (fax)

VIP in New Orleans represents a collaboration between mental health professionals in the Department of Psychiatry at Louisiana State University Health Sciences Center and the New Orleans Police Department. This program uses a systems approach designed to work with the whole community to solve the problem of violence among local youth (Osofsky, 1997). VIP seeks to decrease violence by providing early intervention, counseling, and other services to victims and education and prevention forums to police, parents, and children.

The Child Witness to Violence Project (CWVP) in Boston, MA, operates through the Department of Pediatrics at Boston Medical Center. The project is designed to help young children who, as bystanders, are the invisible victims of community and domestic violence (Groves and Zuckerman, 1997). CWVP helps young children heal from the trauma of witnessing violence by providing developmentally appropriate counseling for them and their families and by consulting with and training the network of caregivers in the lives of young children.

CWVP began in 1992 and currently counsels more than 200 children and families each year. It also implements both national and State training for healthcare professionals, police, educators, and other social services practitioners who confront issues of children witnessing violence. The project is staffed by a multicultural, multilingual staff of social workers, psychologists, early childhood specialists, and a consulting child psychiatrist.

For more information about CWVP, contact:

Child Witness to Violence Project
Boston Medical Center
818 Harrison Avenue, T214
Boston, MA 02118
617-534-4244
617-534-7915 (fax)

The Honorable Cindy Lederman, Administrative Judge of the 11th Judicial Circuit Miami-Dade Juvenile Court, has developed the Dependency Court Intervention Program for Family Violence. Funded by VAWO, this demonstration project addresses, in a juvenile court setting, the co-occurrence of child maltreatment and family violence (Lederman, 1999). Advocates working with battered mothers of dependent children assess the developmental and emotional conditions of the children and plan appropriate interventions to prevent future problems.

For more information about the Dependency Court Intervention Program for Family Violence, contact:

Rubin Carreru
Dependency Court Intervention Program for
Family Violence
175 NW. First Street
Miami, FL 33128
305-375-5278

In addition to the programs described above, numerous other programs have been implemented by Federal agencies in support of the *Action Plan*. For example, the Interagency Initiative on Collaborations To Address Domestic Violence and Child Maltreatment (commonly known as

the Green Book Initiative) is a multiagency demonstration initiative designed to address the co-occurrence of domestic violence and child maltreatment. Jointly funded by DOJ and the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), the Green Book Initiative is managed by a team of eight Federal agencies and offices.[3] The initiative, which includes a demonstration component, a national evaluation, and training and technical assistance, focuses on implementing the recommendations set forth in *Effective Intervention in Domestic Violence and Child Maltreatment Cases: Guidelines for Policy and Practice*, published by the National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges (NCJFCJ). The purpose of the Green Book Initiative is to create and enhance collaborations in selected jurisdictions among domestic violence service providers, child protective services, and juvenile and family courts to enhance the safety and well-being of battered women and their children. In December 2000, six sites were competitively selected to implement this collaborative approach: El Paso County, CO; Grafton County, NH; Lane County, OR; St. Louis County, MO; San Francisco, CA; and Santa Clara County, CA. Each demonstration site receives up to $350,000 per year for 3 years. Policies and practices include cross-system collaboration in identification, safety planning, case management, advocacy, protection, and proper sharing of information; perpetrator accountability; and service provision. The goal of each site is to improve responses that protect and empower women who are victims of abuse and their children.

Additional Federal activities, including other collaborative efforts, are described in the following section.

Federal Activities in Support of Objective 5

In 1999, the Coordinating Council on Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention distributed the National Juvenile Justice Action Plan Survey to determine the progress that Federal agencies have made since 1996 in meeting the eight objectives of the *Action Plan*. Programs and other projects that were reported by Federal agencies as supporting objective 5 are described below, by action step. Activities that respond to multiple action steps are discussed in a separate section. The responses to the survey suggest that DOJ, HHS, and the Corporation for National Service (CNS) bear primary responsibility for programs related to objective 5. In some cases, the activities described below are not identical to those described in the *Action Plan*, but they accomplish the same goals. Some innovative programs not foreseen by the *Action Plan* demonstrate shifts in programmatic priorities and responses to recent trend

Activities That Respond to Action Step 1: Improve Juvenile and Family Court Handling of Child Abuse and Neglect Cases

DOJ. OJJDP supports the **Model Dependency Courts** project through a grant to NCJFCJ. In 1992, NCJFCJ established the Victims Act Model Court (VAMC) Project with the goal of improving court practice in child abuse and neglect cases. The first step was to develop a document for use by juvenile and family court judges interested in improving the processing of child abuse and neglect cases. NCJFCJ formed a committee of judges, court administrators, attorneys, child welfare experts, and others who developed a hands-on bench book (i.e., a book judges can use for reference), *Resource Guidelines: Improving Court Practice in Child Abuse and Neglect Cases*. The second step was to identify a number of courts that would focus on improving practice in child abuse and neglect cases and commit to the principles outlined in the *Resource Guidelines*. Currently, 22 Model Courts participate in the VAMC Project, in localities ranging from large urban centers to rural communities. These Model Courts continually assess their processing of child abuse and neglect cases, focus on factors that delay permanent placements for youth, develop and institute plans for court improvement, and work collaboratively to effect systems change (National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges, 2000). The Model Courts can be replicated to improve court processing of child abuse and neglect cases in rural, urban, and tribal jurisdictions.

OJJDP supports the national **Court Appointed Special Advocates** (CASA) project through a cooperative agreement with the National Court Appointed Special Advocates Association. The project is designed to benefit abused and neglected children who are in foster care, or at risk of being placed in foster care, by encouraging the development of resources and training for CASA programs. It was highlighted in the "Effective and Promising Programs and Strategies" section under objective 5 of the *Action Plan*. In 1990, the U.S. Congress passed the Victims of Child Abuse Act, which allocated Federal funds to start and expand CASA programs. OJJDP continues to support CASA programs and is working to increase the number of children who receive representation in court hearings through CASA volunteers. According to

the *Action Plan*, nearly 700 communities had established CASA programs. In 1994, 37,000 volunteers represented more than 128,000 abused and neglected children. Today, the numbers have increased to an estimated 183,000 abused and neglected children served by 47,000 CASA volunteers, in more than 900 CASA programs nationwide.

OJJDP also funded the American Bar Association's Center on Children and the Law's **Criminal Justice Response to Parental Abduction** project. The goals were to examine and describe the justice system's processing of parental abduction cases and to identify promising approaches the justice system can use to deal with these cases. The project's first phase was a literature and research review. The second phase included a mail survey of a nationally representative sample of prosecutors and law enforcement agencies to gather quantitative information and identify possible sites for two studies: a six-county study to obtain qualitative descriptive information on case processing, and a three-county study to obtain case-level data on all parental abduction cases and track them from entry to disposition. OJJDP plans to publish part of the project's final report as a Bulletin.

To strengthen existing programs and ensure effective evaluations, the National Institute of Justice (NIJ) is sponsoring preparation of the *Evaluation Guidebook for Child Advocacy Centers*, which describes three types of evaluations: program monitoring, program outcomes, and impact analysis. The *Guidebook*, which will be published later in 2001, gives external evaluators a better understanding of the goals for child advocacy centers and includes an appendix on how to develop a protocol and measures for evaluating corollary services.

The Office for Victims of Crime (OVC) supports the **Children's Justice Act Partnerships for Indian Communities** demonstration program, which provides funds to assist American Indian communities in developing and managing programs to improve the investigation, prosecution, and handling of cases involving sexual abuse and serious physical abuse of children. This program reflects DOJ's increased emphasis on assistance to tribal youth programs since the *Action Plan* was published. Positive outcomes of the program include revised tribal codes that pertain to child sexual abuse; protocols and procedures for reporting, investigating, and prosecuting child abuse cases; enhanced case management and treatment services; improved coordination among tribal, Federal, and State child protection services agencies; and improved coordination that minimizes the number of times a child is interviewed.

HHS. In a joint effort with NCJFCJ and OJJDP, the Administration for Children and Families' (ACF's) Children's Bureau sponsored **Launching Improved Court Practices in Child Abuse and Neglect Cases Into the Next Century: The Millennium Conference and Annual Meeting for Criminal Justice Act Grantees**, which was held November 14–16, 1999. The conference's objectives were to integrate improved practice into systems nationwide, to improve permanency planning for abused and neglected children by increasing awareness of the need for thorough judicial review and timely resolution of each case, and to achieve better outcomes for the Nation's abused and neglected children. More than 400 professionals and practitioners participated in the conference, which included both intradisciplinary and interdisciplinary discussions to address the conference's stated objectives. Results included improved communication, coordination, and collaboration within and across disciplines.

ACF's Children's Bureau supports the **State Court Improvement Program**, which works with the highest court in each State to assess and improve State court proceedings related to foster care and adoption. The program encourages juvenile and family court collaboration with child welfare agencies on comprehensive systems reform. It was highlighted in the "Effective and Promising Programs and Strategies" section under objective 5 of the *Action Plan*.

ACF supported the development and publication of ***Guidelines for Public Policy and State Legislation Governing Permanence for Children*** to provide States with guidance for implementing the Adoption and Safe Families Act of 1997 at the State level. A working group composed of child welfare professionals, lawyers, judges, advocates, and frontline workers held discussions for more than a year to develop a document that reflects the best thinking about child welfare policy and legislation. The document was published in June 1999.

Activities That Respond to Action Step 2: Enhance Local Efforts To Investigate and Prosecute Child Abuse and Neglect Cases and Strengthen Child Protective Services

DOJ. OJJDP funds the **Investigation and Prosecution of Parental Kidnaping and Child Exploitation** program with a grant to the American Prosecutors Research Institute (APRI). The program provides training and technical assistance to State and local prosecutors to improve the

handling, investigation, and prosecution of cases involving missing and exploited children. It is part of OJJDP's ongoing commitment to training and technical assistance for juvenile justice professionals.

With a grant from OJJDP, APRI's National Center for Prosecution of Child Abuse works to improve child abuse professionals' competency in investigating and prosecuting child abuse cases. The Center's services include training, technical assistance, and provision of guidelines and related information pertaining to prosecutorial, legal, law enforcement, mental health, and social services aspects of child abuse and neglect. The Center's services are available to prosecutors, investigators, and other professionals in the field of child abuse and neglect.

Through an interagency agreement with NIJ, OJJDP is funding the Evaluation of the Transfer of Responsibility for Child Protective Investigations to Law Enforcement Agencies program with a grant to the Center for the Study of Youth Policy at the University of Pennsylvania's School of Social Work. This program will compare the outcomes in three Florida counties where responsibility for investigations is being transferred to the sheriff's office with outcomes in three comparison counties. The program will consider whether children are safer, whether perpetrators of severe child abuse are more likely to face criminal sanctions, and whether other parts of the child welfare system are affected by the transfer of responsibility. A thorough process evaluation will be conducted to describe and compare the implementation processes in the three counties and to identify major factors that could affect outcomes. Findings will be released when the grant ends in 2002.

VAWO supports the OASIS II program with funds from the Rural Domestic Violence and Child Victimization Enforcement Grant Program. Through a multiagency task force and coordination with OASIS, a program to combat domestic violence against adult women, OASIS II serves and protects child victims of domestic violence and child abuse in Twin Falls, ID, by supporting the local prosecutor's child abuse investigator and a child victim coordinator who works at the local women's shelter. It also runs a media campaign and community outreach program to educate victims, parents, and the general public about child abuse and victimization and collects correlated data about child abuse cases as baseline material for statistics, research, and program evaluation.

HHS. In cooperation with the U.S. Department of Energy and DOJ, HHS's National Institutes of Health (NIH) supports research to enhance the understanding of appropriate services, treatment, management, and strategies for the prevention of child neglect. NIH seeks to stimulate development of research programs on child neglect at institutions that have strong research programs in related areas by encouraging those researchers to study child neglect and to collaborate with those who are already working in the field.

Activities That Respond to Action Step 3: Strengthen At-Risk Families and Support Healthy Start Programs for Children

DOJ. With a grant to the American Bar Association's Center on Children and the Law, OJJDP is supporting the Prevention of Parent or Family Abduction of Children Through Early Identification of Risk Factors project, which reflects DOJ's increased emphasis on the prevention of abduction since the *Action Plan* was published. The project's goal is to reduce the number of parental abductions by identifying the circumstances that are likely to precipitate an abduction by a parent or other family member, identifying and documenting strategies to mitigate these factors, and recommending ways of implementing prevention strategies. The project includes two major data collection efforts in California and a test of high-conflict divorcing couples to determine factors identified with later child abduction. The final Report, entitled *Prevention of Parent and Family Abduction of Children Through Early Identification of Risk Factors*, was completed in 2000. An OJJDP Bulletin based on the larger Report, *Family Abductors: Descriptive Profiles and Preventive Interventions*, was published in January 2001, and a second Bulletin, *Early Identification of Risk Factors for Parental Abduction*, was published in April 2001.

The Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS) program is run by the Yale Child Study Center with a grant from OVC. The COPS program provides school-based clinical interventions to selected youth who have been exposed to community violence in an urban setting. The program also evaluates the impact of the intervention by examining children's psychosocial functioning and their attitudes toward police, school, and violent behavior. The program's goal is to help children who live and attend school in areas

with high rates of crime and violence to identify police as positive authority figures, learn to express their feelings, identify and express a range of appropriate responses to frightening situations, develop problem-solving skills, and feel safer in their schools and communities.

VAWO funds the **Rural Domestic Violence and Child Victimization Enforcement Grant Program** through the Oregon State Office for Services to Children and Families (SCF). In collaboration with the Oregon Coalition Against Domestic Violence, SCF has developed and implemented specialized services for victims of domestic violence who are referred to child protective services. The project seeks to increase the safety of battered women and their children who are referred to child protective services by enhancing collaboration between local SCF branches and domestic violence programs and developing and evaluating specialized, effective services for battered women served by SCF. The project will develop replicable intervention models to support victims and ensure their safety; develop and refine protocols and practice standards for SCF staff, domestic violence programs, and other program partners; and increase staff knowledge about domestic violence and child abuse.

The project will be run by an existing statewide work group of domestic violence advocates and SCF staff, with training and technical assistance provided to local sites by the State Office and a working group. The project will be formally evaluated through a contract with Portland State University's Child Welfare Partnership.

HHS. ACF provides grants for **School-Based Child Maltreatment Prevention, Identification, and Treatment Services** to 18 local nonprofit organizations throughout the Nation. The grants support development and demonstration of service models that address the prevention, identification, and treatment of child abuse and neglect. These models are developed by communities in cooperation with preschool, elementary school, and secondary school systems. The grant program was established in response to the Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act (CAPTA), as amended by Public Law 104–235.

The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) has awarded 10 community-based grants for the **Parenting Adolescents and Welfare Reform** program. The program studies the effects of providing comprehensive services to adolescents and their families who are affected by welfare reform to prevent substance abuse and other problems that negatively affect their health and well-being. Specific goals include preventing or reducing the use of alcohol, tobacco, and illicit drugs; improving academic performance; reducing subsequent pregnancies; and fostering involvement in parenting, life skills, and general well-being.

SAMHSA has awarded 12 grants for the **Starting Early, Starting Smart** (SESS) program. SESS is a child-centered, family-focused, and community-based initiative that is testing the effectiveness of integrating behavioral health services with primary care and early childcare services for children from birth to age 5. SESS provides assistance in both treatment and comparison settings.

Activities That Respond to Action Step 4: Support Community-Based Services That Reduce Family Violence and Victimization

DOJ. The Yale Child Study Center runs the **School-Based Crisis Intervention** project with a grant from OJJDP. The project has developed a standardized protocol for responding to the emotional needs of students and the organizational needs of schools during times of crisis to minimize the trauma of students, staff, and parents. The model outlines the need for specific roles within the crisis team; the importance of and mechanisms for timely notification of administrators, staff, students, and parents; issues to consider when providing short-term support through classroom discussion and support groups; and issues to consider when memorializing a deceased member of the school community. The project offers training and technical assistance.

The Executive Office for Weed and Seed is supporting the **Victim Services Initiative** at various Weed and Seed sites. The initiative develops strategies to address criminal and juvenile justice topics that are of particular concern in the designated neighborhoods. Funds for this initiative may also be used for counseling services, workshops, educational and resource materials, legal assistance, and training for law enforcement and support personnel.

NIJ is funding the American Bar Association's project, **Children Exposed to Domestic Violence: Providing Help Through Community Oriented Policing and Community Partnerships.** The project is investigating both the number of law enforcement agencies working with community providers to help children exposed to domestic violence and the types of partnerships the agencies are forming. The project will determine existing approaches that should be replicated and compile data to measure the impact of

a partnership response to children who have been exposed to domestic violence. The research will begin with a national mail survey of approximately 500 community-oriented law enforcement departments, followed by a telephone survey of 30 communities. A process study of the services children received or did not receive will be conducted through interviews during site visits. The sites will be selected based on the results of the national survey.

Through a research grant to the Education Development Center, Inc., NIJ is supporting a research project called **Battered Women, Battered Children.** Because violence against women and violence against children often coexist in families, this project will study interventions for families in which both domestic violence and child abuse occur, with an emphasis on the role of law enforcement agencies. The project will identify efforts to address the co-occurrence of domestic violence and child abuse, examine existing law enforcement policies and practices, and document promising interventions and services. After studying existing approaches to the problem, the project will use the findings to guide future research and policy analysis. Research methods will include both telephone surveys of national experts, police departments, and domestic violence personnel and site visits in communities with promising approaches.

HHS. ACF's Children's Bureau awarded a grant to Parents Anonymous, Inc., of Santa Clara, CA, to build a national network of parent self-help and mutual support groups that work in close cooperation with State- and community-based child abuse prevention and treatment programs. The collaborative 3-year project encouraged the development of a continuum of community-based prevention services that responded to the needs of families and formed a bridge between shared leadership strategies and more traditional programs. This national network is now operated by Prevent Child Abuse America of Chicago, IL. The new grantee will oversee the national network and establish 100 new parent support groups in currently unserved locations across the country.

ACF has awarded 13 grants for the development of mutual support programs that will assist families, provide early and ongoing support for parents, increase family stability, improve family access to other formal or informal resources available in communities, and support the additional needs of families that have children with disabilities.

The National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA) is supporting the randomized trial of **Families and Schools Together** (FAST), a widely used comprehensive prevention program based on family systems theory and research on risk and protective factors. The research will measure short- and long-term effects of FAST on youth and their families relative to a control group of families and will collect process data on program implementation and participation. At the fourth assessment, 3 years after the program ends, youth court and school records will be reviewed to determine the rate of court involvement and level of school performance.

NIDA is also funding the **Adolescent Drug Use in Rural America** project with a research grant. The project will obtain data on drug use by rural adolescents to provide a foundation for policy decisions and prevention programs in rural communities. The project will provide detailed data on alcohol and drug use and the relationships of individual risk factors, violence, victimization, high-risk drug use, and delinquency to rates of drug use among rural youth. The study will also determine how differences in drug use rates across schools are related to different levels of personal and social risk factors and school and community characteristics.

CNS. AmeriCorps*VISTA members work to reduce domestic abuse and sexual assault through the **South Dakota Network Against Family Violence/Sexual Assault.** Members help with administrative tasks, victim advocacy, training, and community fundraising in shelters in eight communities. Volunteers also form community networks to help homeless victims of abuse with housing, employment, childcare, and other services.

AmeriCorps*VISTA members also work with the State Department of Public Health and Human Services in Helena, MT, to support and promote interagency collaboration. They support the development of interagency prevention programs and services that can be delivered in a flexible manner to meet the needs of at-risk children and their families.

The National Endowment for the Arts (NEA). In partnership with the President's Committee on the Arts and the Humanities, NEA has sponsored the **Coming Up Taller Awards** program since 1998. The awards recognize and reward arts and humanities programs that give children safe, stable environments in which to learn and opportunities to develop their skills. One winner of the Coming Up Taller Awards in 2000 was the Illusion Theater, which uses the power of theater as a catalyst for personal and social change. The theater's nationally acclaimed sexual abuse prevention play, *Touch*, was created in 1978 through a unique collaboration with the Child Sexual Abuse

Prevention Project of the Hennepin County (MN) Attorney's Office. Written for children in grades 3 to 5, *Touch* explains the continuum of touches—from good to confusing to bad—and teaches children protection and prevention skills for personal safety. A second play, *No Easy Answers*, was written for students in grades 7 to 12. This play addresses adolescent issues of sexuality, sexual abuse, and the misuse of power in relationships while exploring protection and prevention skills. Illusion Theater's innovative Peer Education Program gives agencies, schools, and other groups the rights to perform Illusion's educational plays for their own communities, with scripts, training, performance direction, evaluation, and ongoing technical assistance from the theater's staff of trained professionals. The most popular peer education model is TRUST: Teaching Reaching Using Students and Theater. At TRUST sites, high school students perform Illusion's educational plays for local elementary, middle, and high schools.[4]

Activities That Respond to Action Step 5: Provide Training and Technical Assistance To Strengthen Agencies Serving Children and Their Families

DOJ. OJJDP awarded a grant to the Child Welfare League of America in support of its project **Strengthening Services for Chemically Involved Children, Youth, and Families.** The project provides training and technical assistance that teach professionals in the fields of child welfare, substance abuse prevention, and family law how to use the project's assessment tool and decisionmaking guidelines and how to promote their use.

OJJDP and the U.S. Department of Education's Safe and Drug-Free Schools Program fund the **Partners Against Hate Program,** which offers comprehensive outreach, education, and training that addresses youth-initiated violence. The Anti-Defamation League, the Leadership Conference Education Fund, and the Center for the Prevention of Hate Violence administer the program. Highlights of the program include the development of an activity guide and Web site; a training program for middle school hate crime prevention initiatives; a guide for peer leadership that includes information for parents and families, community members, and law enforcement officials; and the development of a training program for national and State policymakers.

For more information about the Partners Against Hate Program, contact:

Deborah A. Batiste, Project Director
Anti-Defamation League
1100 Connecticut Avenue NW., Suite 1020
Washington, DC 20036
202-452-8310
202-296-2371 (fax)
batiste@partnershipagainsthate.org
www.partnershipagainsthate.org

OJJDP is supporting the **Association of Missing and Exploited Children's Organizations** (AMECO), which was created through an OJJDP grant to the National Victims Center in 1994 and is the only national nonprofit organization of its type. In fiscal year (FY) 1998, OJJDP awarded funding to AMECO to establish a coordinator position. The coordinator is responsible for conducting the day-to-day administrative activities, finalizing and disseminating standardized intake forms, developing an AMECO ALERT system of response, and supporting the dissemination of information on missing children through AMECO's members. The coordinator also oversees the association's newsletter and maintains a calendar of ongoing events to raise awareness of missing and exploited children's issues and related training opportunities.

Shortly after the coordinator position was established, AMECO underwent several positive changes, including the development of ethics standards for membership, fiscal accountability, and regular meetings of the Board of Directors. Since 1998, AMECO has also accomplished the following with OJJDP support: increased its membership from 9 to 42 organizations, adapted standardized intake forms for members, and produced a newsletter to aid and support nonprofit missing and exploited children's organizations. AMECO also created an online "AMECO CHAT" service for its members and other interested parties. OJJDP receives the newsletter and has a direct link to AMECO on its Web site. This project ensures that missing and exploited children's activities are effectively managed and coordinated with both public (governmental) and private agencies that serve these children.

For more information about AMECO, contact:

Janice Rench, Executive Director
AMECO
167 Washington Street
Norwell, MA 02061
781-878-3033
781-878-4974 (fax)

OJJDP funds **Team Hope**, a missing and exploited children program run by the Public Administration Service, to provide support services and referrals to families of missing children. The program trains parents whose children are or have been missing to serve as mentors and to provide advice to families of missing children. In FY 1999, more than 20 parent volunteers began assisting other parents with advice and information about resources to help them in searching for their children. More than 50 families received services through Team Hope.

NIJ supported the University of Minnesota's Office of Sponsored Programs **Conference on Domestic Violence and Children** with a research grant. The 12-month project planned and convened a small conference to develop and organize the national and international research agenda for studying families in which both children and their mothers are abused and in which children witness domestic violence. The 3-day conference, held in February 1999, included 18 participants.

HHS. ACF's Children's Bureau supports **10 National Resource Centers**, which provide training and technical assistance in foster care and permanency planning, information technology in child welfare services, organizational improvement, special needs adoption, youth development, addressing child maltreatment, family-centered practice, legal and judicial issues, abandoned infants assistance, and community-based family resource and support programs. Centers were established to provide training and technical assistance to community-based programs to support statutorily mandated programs and to provide services to grantees.

ACF's Children's Bureau operates the **National Clearinghouse on Child Abuse and Neglect Information** to meet the cross-disciplinary needs of professionals working in the areas of child abuse and neglect, child welfare, and adoption. The clearinghouse offers access to government and other resources related to these fields by maintaining an extensive document collection and providing information and referrals, technical assistance, and other products and services.[5]

A project of the National Clearinghouse on Child Abuse and Neglect Information, the **Child Welfare Training Online Network** is designed to enable State trainers, practitioners, social work educators, and other stakeholders to locate the most current training and resource materials available for the child welfare workforce. The Online Network also offers opportunities to share information and communicate with other colleagues about training curriculums, training evaluation, and issues and practices related to workforce development and retention.[6]

The interagency agreement between ACF's Administration on Children, Youth and Families and HHS's Indian Health Service (IHS) provides funding for a program to train IHS local and tribal mental health and social services professionals in all aspects of preventing and treating child physical and sexual abuse in American Indian communities. The program, which began in 1994, continues to provide funds for training programs through the University of Oklahoma's model program, Making Medicine.

NIDA is supporting a study entitled **Diffusion of State Risk/Protective Focused Prevention.** Risk- and protective-focused prevention planning is promising, yet little is known about the process for or effectiveness of changing State and community prevention systems to implement the model. The study is a joint effort by the Social Development Research Group of the University of Washington in Seattle and substance abuse agencies in Colorado, Illinois, Kansas, Maine, Oregon, Utah, and Washington. Detailed information is being collected in 41 communities in these 7 States.

Activities That Respond to Action Step 6: Improve Services to Children Who Are Victims of Abuse and Other Crimes

DOJ. OVC is supporting the development of *Guidelines for Mental Health Treatment of Child Victims of Intrafamilial Abuse* by the National Crime Victims Research and Treatment Center at the Medical University of South Carolina. An advisory committee composed of experts in the treatment of child abuse victims has reviewed current practice guidelines in the field and established criteria for describing both the problems associated with abuse and the effectiveness of common treatments for abuse-related trauma. OVC will publish the *Guidelines* and distribute them to crime victim compensation programs, providers of mental health treatment to children, and child abuse professionals. OVC has awarded a grant to the American Professional Society on the Abuse of Children to conduct training on the mental health practices recommended in the *Guidelines*.

HHS. HHS supports the **Foster Care Funding** program through Title IV–E of the Social Security Act. The program provides funds to State agencies to assist with the costs of foster care, the administrative costs of managing the program, and training for staff, foster parents, and private agency staff. The funds help States provide proper care for children who need placement outside their homes (with a

foster family or in an institution). This is an open-ended entitlement program that seeks to strengthen families in which children are at risk. It fulfills the forecast in the *Action Plan* that HHS would continue to provide discretionary child welfare training grants and promote the use of Social Security Act Title IV-E training funds to enhance child welfare practice (Coordinating Council on Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, 1996:74).

ACF is supporting the Children's Bureau's Independent Living Program (ILP), which helps older youth gain the skills they need to move from foster care to self-supported, independent living. ILP provides educational and employment assistance, training in daily living skills, counseling, coordination of services, outreach programs, and individualized transitional living plans. In addition to assisting youth in the process of moving out of foster care, ILP reaches some children under age 16 and former foster care youth ages 18–21 who have left the child welfare system.

In response to a new Federal regulation that outlines Federal/State partnerships to review the foster care eligibility and family service systems in each State, ACF sponsors the Foster Care Eligibility Reviews and Child and Family Services (CFS) Reviews programs. The regulation implements existing legislation and adds new requirements governing a State's conformity with its plans under relevant legislation. The regulation clarifies certain eligibility criteria that govern foster care eligibility review and also makes technical changes to the race and ethnicity data in the Adoption and Foster Care Analysis and Reporting System. CFS Reviews seek to ensure the safety, permanency, and well-being of children in the child welfare system.

Activities That Respond to Multiple Action Steps

DOJ. The Children Exposed to Violence Initiative (CEVI), launched in December 1998 and currently coordinated by the Office for Victims of Crime at DOJ, is a far-reaching, multistakeholder, multisector, comprehensive framework that encompasses more than two dozen programs and strategies designed to improve the justice system's approach and communities' responses to child crime victims and witnesses. There are five goal areas under CEVI: (1) justice system reform, (2) Federal and State legislative reform, (3) program support and development, (4) community outreach/public awareness, and (5) parenting education. Work in these areas spans prevention strategies, intervention programs, and offender accountability.

All of OJJDP's programs and initiatives that address child protection issues—child and adolescent maltreatment, victimization, exposure to violence, and exploitation—are coordinated with CEVI. These include Safe Kids/Safe Streets, Safe Start, the National Center for Children Exposed to Violence, the Children's Advocacy Center Program, Court Appointed Special Advocates, Model Dependency Courts, Parents Anonymous®, and Missing and Exploited Children's Programs. OJJDP also contributes financial and staff resources to CEVI-launched activities, including national, regional, and State summits and the development and distribution of resource materials.

OJJDP established the National Center for Children Exposed to Violence (NCCEV) at the Yale Child Study Center as part of the Children Exposed to Violence Initiative. NCCEV, through support from OJJDP, is a resource and training and technical assistance facility charged with enhancing public awareness of the negative consequences of children's exposure to violence. With increasing community capacity to respond to that exposure. NCCEV's three primary objectives are to promote public and professional awareness of the effects of violence on children, to provide training and technical assistance to communities around the country that are developing collaborative efforts to respond to children and families exposed to violence, and to establish a national clearinghouse and Web site for information about violent traumatization and successful approaches to intervention. NCCEV pursues its goals by coordinating and providing a range of training and technical assistance to the Safe Start demonstration sites and by operating a national clearinghouse and resource center as a repository of information about the developmental risks and long-term consequences of children's exposure to violence.

The Children's Advocacy Center Program is implemented through OJJDP's support of the National Children's Alliance and the Regional Children's Advocacy Centers. The National Children's Alliance administers a national grants program and a training and technical assistance program. These programs respond to action steps 1, 2, 4, 5, and 6. The programs help communities improve their response to child abuse by establishing children's advocacy centers (CACs) and providing training and technical assistance to emerging, developing, and established CACs. The programs also collect national data from CACs on numbers and types of cases and outcomes, and they administer standards for CACs through site visits, consultations, and technical assistance.

The Regional Children's Advocacy Centers project, supported by OJJDP, also responds to action steps 1, 2, 4, 5, and 6. CACs were featured in the "Effective and Promising Strategies and Programs" section under objective 5 of the *Action Plan* (Coordinating Council on Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, 1996:70) and this project funds their work. The four Regional CACs (Midwest, Northeast, Southern, and Western) have received grants to encourage and facilitate the creation of multidisciplinary teams and child advocacy centers. The Regional CACs help communities develop appropriate responses to child abuse, offer multidisciplinary services to child victims and their families, enhance the skills of volunteers, provide support for nonoffending family members of child victims, enhance coordination among community agencies, support national coordination, develop and use training and technical assistance materials, and implement national standards of practice.

The Safe Start Initiative, funded by OJJDP, responds to action steps 1–6. This initiative seeks to prevent and reduce the impact of family and community violence on children from birth to age 6 by creating coordinated and comprehensive service delivery systems. Safe Start demonstration communities are working to expand existing partnerships among service providers in the areas of early childhood education/development, health, mental health, family support and strengthening, domestic violence, substance abuse prevention and treatment, crisis intervention, child welfare, law enforcement, courts, and legal services. This comprehensive service-providing system is designed to improve the availability, delivery, and quality of services for young children who are at high risk of exposure to violence or who have been exposed to violence, along with their families and caregivers, at any point of entry into the system.

NIJ is funding an ongoing research project on childhood victimization and delinquency with a grant to the Washington Department of Social and Human Services. The study was designed to replicate the original NIJ study that established the connection between child abuse and neglect and increased risk of later criminal behavior. The study will attempt to document the prevalence of delinquency, criminality, and violence in a cohort of abused and/or neglected children and a control group in the Northwest, including American Indians, for the years 1985–98; determine the extent to which different types of maltreatment are associated with the development of later violent criminal behavior; and determine the extent to which out-of-home placement mediates the criminal consequences of abuse and neglect. This study will improve the American Indian comparison component of the original study, add arrest data from the Federal Bureau of Investigation and the States, and provide a more comprehensive assessment of placement histories than is currently available.

Prior to the development of the Green Book Initiative, HHS, through work by ACF and the Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation, collaborated with DOJ's OVC to support the publication of *Effective Intervention in Domestic Violence and Child Maltreatment Cases: Guidelines for Policy and Practice*. The document, which is based on the findings of an advisory committee that was convened by NCJFCJ, states that community leaders should collaborate to develop responses that provide meaningful help, support, and services for families exposed to domestic violence and child maltreatment. Communities should hold perpetrators accountable for their behavior and provide legal interventions to stop violence. These *Guidelines* serve as the foundation for the Green Book Initiative which, as previously described, is designed to implement the recommended policies and practices of the *Guidelines*.

With a grant to the University of Cincinnati, OH, NIJ is funding the **Developmental Theory and Battering Incidents** research project. The project is examining the relationships of parolees and their spouses in light of Moffitt's (1993) developmental theory of offending behavior, which identifies two varieties of offending behavior: life-course persistent and adolescent-linked. The project examines how factors related to serious intimate partner violence vary across discrete offender groups. The project asks how the developmental theory is related to intimate partner violence; whether there is a relationship between partner violence and early family characteristics, such as childhood exposure to violence; and whether developmental paths to domestic violence differ from those toward other types of violence. The data, including official demographic and self-report information from a sample of 285 parolees and their spouses or partners, were collected in Buffalo, NY, in 1997.

The National Resource Center and Clearinghouse (the Clearinghouse), a training and technical assistance program supported by OJJDP through a cooperative agreement with the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children (NCMEC), responds to action steps 2 and 5. Through the Clearinghouse, NCMEC offers a variety of services to families, law enforcement agencies, and the media to aid in searches for missing children. NCMEC offers technical case assistance, imaging identification services, photograph and poster distribution, age-enhancement of photographs,

recovery assistance, and hotline and referral services. NCMEC also assists families and law enforcement agencies with international parental abduction cases and child sexual exploitation cases.

OJJDP supports the **Missing and Exploited Children's Training and Technical Assistance Program** through a grant to Fox Valley Technical College. The program, which responds to action steps 2 and 5, provides current, comprehensive training and technical assistance to law enforcement agencies, missing children organizations, prosecutors, State clearinghouses, and nonprofit organizations on issues relating to missing, exploited, and abducted children. Training emphasizes investigative techniques, interview strategies, comprehensive response planning, media relations, lead and case management, and other relevant topics. Each year, the college trains more than 1,500 practitioners and provides technical assistance to more than 4,300 practitioners.

With grants to Parents Anonymous, Inc., and its affiliates in nine States, OJJDP supports **Strengthening Families All Across America**, which responds to action steps 2 and 5. The program works to build and support strong, safe families in partnership with local communities by using the Parents Anonymous® model to help break the cycle of child abuse and delinquency. It offers resources including training and technical assistance, a program manual, program material, and subcontracted funds for program expansion. Services include designing a national helpline, refining a national database, and providing training on strategies for best practice for staff who serve as Parents Anonymous® certified trainers.

OJJDP is funding research on **Impacts of Childhood Abuse on Juvenile Violence and Domestic Violence: Measuring and Detecting the Intervening Influences of Race and Poverty.** This research project examines the relationship between child abuse, juvenile delinquency, and domestic violence. The project will measure the independent impacts of race and poverty on violence from youth to early adulthood.

The Secondary Analysis of Childhood Victimization Data, which investigates the relationship between running away, substance abuse, and child abuse and neglect, is another research project being funded by OJJDP. The project uses a large database that was constructed in 1996 with initial support from NIJ. The data set includes detailed information on psychiatric, cognitive, intellectual, social, and behavioral functioning in addition to documented and self-reported criminal and runaway behavior in a large number of substantiated cases of physical and sexual abuse and neglect in early childhood. OJJDP is supporting secondary analysis of these data to investigate childhood victimization as it relates to running away, drug use, and delinquency. Issues related to gender and race/ethnicity will also be explored.

HHS. HHS supported the **Childhood Victimization and Lifetime Victimization** research project to examine the mental health outcomes of victims of child abuse and neglect. The project convincingly demonstrated that childhood victimization places children at increased risk for delinquency, adult criminality, violent criminal behavior, and victimization.

HHS is also supporting a research project on Intergenerational Transmission of Antisocial Behavior. The project includes a series of studies that will help clarify continuity and discontinuity of a range of antisocial behaviors from parent to child.

ACF supports the **Children's Justice Act (CJA)** program, funded by the Victims of Crimes Act of 1984 and administered by the Office of Child Abuse and Neglect. CJA seeks to improve the investigation and prosecution of cases of child abuse and neglect, particularly child sexual abuse and exploitation, in a manner that limits additional trauma to the child victim. It also supports the investigation and prosecution of maltreatment-related child fatality cases. CJA responds to action steps 1 and 2.

Through its grants to lead State agencies, ACF's Children's Bureau supports the **Community-Based Family Resources Grants Program**, which was mandated by Title II of the Child Abuse and Neglect Prevention and Treatment Act, as amended October 3, 1996. The program, which responds to action steps 3 and 4, seeks to develop, operate, expand, and enhance statewide networks of community-based, prevention-focused family resource and support programs; provide early, comprehensive support for parents; promote the development of parenting skills; increase family stability; improve family access to resources within the community; support the special needs of families that have children with disabilities; and decrease the risk of homelessness. The program also encourages the development of a continuum of preventive services for children and families through State and community-based collaboration.

ACF also supports **Promoting Safe and Stable Families**, which responds to action steps 3 and 6. The project funds State programs to prevent the unnecessary separation of

children from their families, improve the quality of care and services to children and their families, and ensure permanency for children by reuniting them with their parents. Funds are available for planning, and grantees are required to develop comprehensive 5-year plans to strengthen and better integrate the design and delivery of services to families and children.

ACF's Children's Bureau is supporting the LongSCAN Longitudinal Research Project with grants to the Consortium for Longitudinal Studies of Child Maltreatment. The project will conduct national studies of children who are at risk of abuse or neglect or who are in the child welfare system. The studies will address the program, practice, and policy issues that are relevant to the child welfare system and that affect outcomes for children and families. Uniform baseline assessments of child, maternal, and family characteristics across sites are used, beginning when the children's ages range from infancy to 4 years. Comprehensive assessments are being carried out at ages 4, 6, 8, and 12, with additional collections planned for ages 16 and 20, with tracking in interim years. In addition to a common battery of measures, each site will collect site-specific data.

Through a contract with Research Triangle Institute, ACF is supporting the National Survey of Child and Adolescent Well-Being, a national study of children who are at risk of abuse or neglect or who are in the child welfare system. The study will describe the children and families who come into contact with the child welfare system and will examine child and family risk factors, service needs, and services received. In the long term, the study will describe the child welfare system and the experiences of children and families involved in the system, examine outcomes for these children and families, and describe the interaction of the child welfare system with other service systems.

ACF supported a publication entitled *Child Maltreatment 1999: Reports From the States to the National Child Abuse and Neglect Data System* (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration on Children, Youth and Families, 2001).[7] This data system, which was developed in consultation with State and local protective service agencies, has two components. The summary data component collects aggregate data from each State through an annual survey, and the detailed case data component collects automated, case-level data from States on an annual basis. The publication informs the Nation about the extent of the problem of child abuse and neglect to improve policy and practice and ultimately prevent child abuse and neglect.

NIDA awarded a grant to fund the research project Drug Use Among Indians—Epidemiology and Prediction. The project has been collecting data since 1974 using biennial school-based surveys of all 7th and 12th grade students in randomly selected American Indian reservation schools. Followup data were collected from absentees and a sample of dropouts. The project monitors patterns, trends, and correlates of drug use among American Indian youth living on reservations; determines rates of violence, victimization, and other criminal behavior; and studies the interrelationship among these variables to provide a foundation for policy decisions and prevention programs in tribal communities.

Conclusion

Through the programs described above, DOJ, HHS, CNS, and NEA are working to break the cycle of violence by addressing youth victimization, abuse, and neglect. Research on programs that address youth victimization has identified key elements of effective programs and issues that should be emphasized by new programs (Chalk and King, 1998). Effective prevention efforts and programs need to be directed toward parents, caregivers, and families and should focus on issues of violence within the family. Effective primary prevention should focus on training parents, teachers, principals, daycare providers, law enforcement officers, and juvenile justice system professionals to recognize "red flags" and identify risk factors for victimization early in a child's life. From a law enforcement perspective, community-oriented policing that builds trust and relationships with both juveniles and family members and that is primarily proactive rather than reactive will go a long way toward preventing juvenile crime and child victimization. Programs to help children cope with trauma must be able to address the issues of domestic violence and trauma to parents or caregivers. By incorporating these elements into future prevention and intervention programs and continuing to study effective strategies, practitioners can help break the cycle of violence by minimizing youth victimization and exposure to violence.

For Further Information

For more information about current Federal efforts to reduce and prevent youth exposure to violence, visit the Web sites of the following agencies:

U.S. Department of Justice
950 Pennsylvania Avenue NW.
Washington, DC 20530
www.usdoj.gov

Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention
810 Seventh Street NW.
Washington, DC 20531
www.ojjdp.ncjrs.org

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
200 Independence Avenue SW.
Washington, DC 20201
www.hhs.gov

Corporation for National Service
1201 New York Avenue NW.
Washington, DC 20525
www.cns.gov

National Endowment for the Arts
1100 Pennsylvania Avenue NW.
Washington, DC 20506
arts.endow.gov

National Center for Children Exposed to Violence
Yale Child Study Center
230 South Frontage Road
P.O. Box 207900
New Haven, CT 06520-7900
www.nccev.org

For an annotated list of resource documents related to this Bulletin, call the Juvenile Justice Clearinghouse (JJC) at 800-638-8736. The list is also available through JJC's Fax-on-Demand service at the same toll-free number (select option 1) and online at puborder.ncjrs.org.

Endnotes

1. The data year cited in the *Action Plan* was 1994. Because of the time required for analysis and publication, dates of the most current data cited in this Bulletin range from 1996 to 1999.

2. Behrman, R.E., ed. 1999. *Domestic Violence and Children*. The Future of Children series 9(3).

3. Within DOJ's Office of Justice Programs, OJJDP, VAWO, the National Institute of Justice, and the Office for Victims of Crime all contribute to the Green Book Initiative. Within HHS, the following offices are participating: the Office of the Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation, the Administration for Children and Families' Children's Bureau and Family Violence Program, and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's Center for Injury Prevention and Control.

4. For more information about the Illusion Theater, contact:

Illusion Theater and School, Inc.
528 Hennepin Avenue, Suite 704
Minneapolis, MN 55403
612-339-4944
612-337-8042 (fax)
mrobins@illusiontheater.org

5. More information about the clearinghouse is available online at www.calib.com/nccanch.

6. More information about the Child Welfare Training Online Network is available online at www.childwelfaretraining.org.

7. The publication is available online at www.acf.dhhs.gov/programs/cb/publications/cm99/index.htm.

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Coordinating Council Members

As designated by legislation, the Coordinating Council's primary function is to coordinate all Federal juvenile delinquency prevention programs, all Federal programs and activities that detain or care for unaccompanied juveniles, and all Federal programs relating to missing and exploited children. The Council comprises nine statutory members and nine practitioner members representing disciplines that focus on youth.

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Washington, DC 20530

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Joy D. Osofsky, Ph.D., is Professor of Public Health, Psychiatry, and Pediatrics in the Department of Psychiatry, Louisiana State University Health Sciences Center, New Orleans, LA.

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The Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention is a component of the Office of Justice Programs, which also includes the Bureau of Justice Assistance, the Bureau of Justice Statistics, the National Institute of Justice, and the Office for Victims of Crime.

Objectives of the National Juvenile Justice Action Plan

1. Provide immediate intervention and appropriate sanctions and treatment for delinquent juveniles.
2. Prosecute certain serious, violent, and chronic juvenile offenders in criminal court.
3. Reduce youth involvement with guns, drugs, and gangs.
4. Provide opportunities for children and youth.
5. Break the cycle of violence by addressing youth victimization, abuse, and neglect.
6. Strengthen and mobilize communities.
7. Support the development of innovative approaches to research and evaluation.
8. Implement an aggressive public outreach campaign on effective strategies to combat juvenile violence.

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